

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

New claim 22 has been added.

This amendment adds, changes and/or deletes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier. Applicant respectfully submits that the disclosure of Applicant's application provides support for the amendments to the claims. For example, at least Figure 9 provides support for the amendment to claim 1 and for new claim 22.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1-22 are now pending in this application.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 18-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,938,624 to Akerfeldt *et al.* (hereafter "Akerfeldt"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference. *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 2 USPQ 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). See generally MPEP § 2131.

Claims 18-20 have been amended to depend from claim 1. As noted on page 3 of the Office Action, Akerfeldt does not disclose that at least one of the conductors of a male connector for a guide wire extends from at least about a distal end of the male connector, beyond a distal end of a respective conductive member towards a proximal end of the respective conductive member along at least a substantial portion of the respective conductive

member, as recited in claim 1. Therefore, Akerfeldt does not anticipate claims 18-20 because Akerfeldt does not disclose all of the features of claim 1, from which claims 18-20 depend.

For at least the reasons discussed above, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-15 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Akerfeldt in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,374,285 to Vaiani *et al.* (hereafter “Vaiani”). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As noted above, the Office suggests on page 3 of the Office Action that Akerfeldt does not disclose or suggest that at least one of the conductors of a male connector for a guide wire extends from at least about a distal end of the male connector, beyond a distal end of a respective conductive member towards a proximal end of the respective conductive member along at least a substantial portion of the respective conductive member, as recited in claim 1. Claims 2-15 and 21 depend from claim 1.

Vaiani discloses a spinal electrode catheter that includes electrically conductive wires 2 connected at one end to a terminal 4 located externally of an outer sheath 1 of the catheter. See Vaiani at col. 3, lines 13-30. The catheter further includes a set of first contact rings 5 and second encapsulating rings 6. See Vaiani at col. 3, lines 31-35. Vaiani discloses that bared ends of the wires 2 are flattened against the first contact rings 5, permitted the bared end of the wires 2 to “be anchored to best possible effect.” See Vaiani at col. 3, lines 59-68. The second rings 6 are positioned over the ends of the wires 2, which are flattened against the first rings 5, to encapsulate both the wires 2 and the rings 5, thus completely assembly of the sensor 4 or electrode P. See Vaiani at col. 4, lines 1-6, and Figures 3 and 4.

The Office argues on page 4 of the Office Action that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the device of Akerfeldt by the teachings of Vaiani. In particular, the Office argues that it would have been obvious to use the structure of the

wires 2 and rings 5 in the device of Akerfeldt to provide a wired connection that extends in the directions argued by the Office.

However, Vaiani teaches that such a structure requires first rings 5 and second rings 6 to flatten and connect wires 2 and to complete the assembly of a sensor or electrode. As shown in Figure 3 of Vaiani, such a structure does not provide at least one conductor that extends from a distal end of a male connector, between a respective one and only one conductive member connected to the at least one conductor and a center of the male connector, beyond a proximal end of the respective one and only one conductive member, and then extends back between the respective one and only one conductive member and the center of the male connector such that an end of the at least one conductor extends towards the distal end of the respective one and only one conductive member, as recited in claim 1.

Instead, when the ends of the wires 2 of Vaiani are flattened against the outside surface of the first rings 5 by the second rings 6, as shown in Figure 3, the ends of the wires 2 of Vaiani wrap around the rings 5 to an outer surface of the rings so that the wires 2 do not extend between the rings 5 and a center of the device of Vaiani towards a proximal end of the ring 5 after extending towards its distal end. The device of Vaiani further includes the second ring 6 and thus does not provide that each conductor is connected to one and only one respective conductive member, as recited in claim 1, because the wires 2 of Vaiani are instead connected to both rings 5 and 6. Therefore, the combination of Akerfeldt and Vaiani does not disclose or suggest all of the features of claim 1.

Such an arrangement, as recited in claim 1, provides extra wire that advantageously accommodates bending of the entire male connector. Vaiani does not provide at least the conductor structure of claim 1 and has no reason to include such a conductor structure. Instead, Vaiani teaches clamping the ends of the wires 2 between rings 5, 6 as a way to hold the wire ends in place. In fact, the device of Vaiani, due to its ring structure, could break under bending stresses, such as when an attempt is made to insert a male connector into a female connector but misses, causing the male connector to bend at a sharp angle.

In addition, the device of Vaiani is a spinal electrode catheter, not a male connector. Applicant respectfully submits that it would not have been obvious to modify the device of Akerfeldt by the teachings of Vaiani because these are different devices with different uses and considerations.

For at least the reasons discussed above, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the allowance of claims 16 and 17. In response to the reasons of allowance provided on page 6 of the Office Action, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 16 and 17 are allowable for all of the features recited in claims 16 and 17, not solely those features noted on page 6 of the Office Action. Applicant respectfully requests the Office to state in the next Office correspondence if the Office believes otherwise.

New Claim

New claim 22 has been added. Claim 22 depends from claim 1 and is allowable over the prior art for at least the reasons discussed above and for its respective additional recitations. For example, the combination of Akerfeldt and Vaiani would not provide a male connector, wherein an outer surface of insulating material and outer surfaces of conductive members are coextensive such that the outer surface of the male connector is continuous, constant in diameter, and substantially uniform along a length of the male connector along a longitudinal axis of the male connector, as recited in claim 22, because using the connecting structure disclosed by Vaiani would cause the outer surface of the male connector to bulge outward at rings 5, 6 so that the outer surface of insulating material and outer surfaces of conductive members would not be continuous, constant in diameter, and substantially uniform along a length of the male connector, as recited in claim 22.

Conclusion

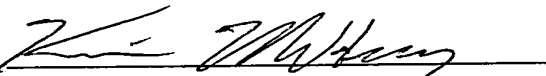
Applicants submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing or a credit card payment form being unsigned, providing incorrect information resulting in a rejected credit card transaction, or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicants hereby petition for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date JAN 29 2010

By 

FOLEY & LARDNER LLP
Customer Number: 22428
Telephone: (202) 295-4011
Facsimile: (202) 672-5399

Glenn Law
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 34,371

Kevin L. McHenry
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 62,582